



Strengthening Apprenticeships for Justice-Impacted Communities Act

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Background

Justice-impacted individuals face significant barriers to reentering the workforce, often having limited vocational skills and work experience.¹ While some correctional facilities offer education and vocational training programs, the quality of such programs can be poor. There exists a huge disparity of quality between pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs in correctional facilities on the one hand and those outside of correctional facilities on the other. Quality pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs will improve the occupational outlook for justice-involved people and reduce recidivism.

Benefits of Improving Pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship Programs for Justice-Impacted Individuals

Studies show that vocational training is successful in reducing recidivism and helping incarcerated individuals reenter the community. Justice impacted individuals who received correctional education while incarcerated have a 43 percent lower rate of recidivism than individuals who did not participate. In addition, correctional education programs increase the likelihood of employment by 13 percent for justice-impacted individuals. Most importantly, the post-release employment rate for justice-impacted individuals who participated in vocational training programs while incarcerated is 28 percent higher than that of individuals who did not participate.² Pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs for justice-impacted individuals lead to long-term post-release success, improved public safety, and stronger communities.

About the Legislation

The Strengthening Apprenticeships for Justice-Impacted Communities Act would:

- Authorize the Department of Labor to provide grants to eligible entities to establish, expand or improve pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeships for incarcerated and justice impacted individuals
- Encourage employer participation in pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs targeting justice impacted individuals through financial assistance to support costs related to the program, including wages for program participants
- Help justice-impacted apprentices successfully complete their apprenticeships by providing funds to cover costs such as transportation, equipment, childcare and housing that might otherwise prevent program completion

¹ Davis, Lois, Robert Bozick, Jennifer Steele, Jessica Saunders, and Jeremy Miles. "Evaluating the Effectiveness of Correctional Education: A Meta-Analysis of Programs That Provide Education to Incarcerated Adults." RAND Corporation, n.d. <https://doi.org/10.7249/rr266>.

² *ibid.*



- Establish an Office of Correctional Apprenticeships to:
 - **1)** ensure that all Federal correctional institutions provide quality pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeship programs for incarcerated individuals that pay fair and graduated wages, and
 - **2)** offer training and technical assistance for State prison systems and employers seeking to operate or improve pre-apprenticeship or apprenticeship programs for incarcerated and justice impacted individuals
- Establish an Interagency Task Force on Strengthening Employment Opportunities and Outcomes for Justice-Impacted Communities to identify and promote best practices relating to apprenticeship training for incarcerated and formerly individuals